

Officium Parvum de Septem Doloribus B. V. M.
Little Office of the Seven Sorrows of the B. V. M.

The Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, also known as the Seven Dolors, is a devotion ordered to create in the hearts of the Christian faithful a tender compassion for the sufferings of the Mother of God and ultimately Christ Himself. The devotion focuses on the sorrows which the most Holy Virgin endured throughout her life, starting with the prophecy of Simeon and ending at Calvary. The sight of great misfortune is always moving, but our feelings are deepened when the one who suffers is a beloved mother who weeps at the sufferings and death of her Son. Her grief was greater than we can imagine. It is such a grief that moves us to a heartfelt and sincere compassion for her and her Son, for both suffered for the love of us. It is we who have crucified her Son by our sins. It is we who have pierced her heart with the sword of grief. It is we who have caused her tears. It is she and her Son who have sacrificed themselves for the love of us, Christ on the Cross, Mary at the foot of the Cross. The exact period in which this devotion arose is difficult to pinpoint. In some sense this devotion to the sorrows of Mary is as old as the Church Herself, for its origins lie with Mary herself, whose heart was pierced by a sword (Lk 2:36) as she stood at the foot of the Cross (Jn 19:25-27). Indeed down through the ages various authors note in passing about the sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, but there is little to go on in tracing the devotion. That changes in the second millennium and by the 13th century it is very clear that there was a general devotion to the Sorrows of Mary as evidenced by such hymns as the Stabat Mater Dolorosa. While the Franciscans and Dominicans contributed to the spread of this devotion, it was the Servites who are chiefly responsible for its propagation. In 1233 seven wealthy gentlemen of Florence renounced their wealth for the service of God, and started the Order of the Servants of Mary, otherwise known as the Servites. Several years later, in 1240, these seven founders of the Servite Order took up the Sorrows of Mary as the principal devotion of their order. Since then the Servite Order has spread the devotion to the Sorrows of Mary throughout the world. In 1423, a synod at Cologne introduced a Mass text and prescribed a feast in honor of the Seven Sorrows to be annually held in western Germany. In 1727, Pope Benedict XIII (d 1730) extended this feast to the whole Church and it is still celebrated today on September 15. The Little Office below is from the writings of the Servite Order.

Ordinaria

Ave Maria...

Ad Matutinum

V. Domine labia mea aperies.
R. Et os meum annuntiabit
laudem tuam.

Ad Completorium

V. Converte nos Deus
salutaris noster.
R. Et averte iram etc.

Ad Horas Omnes

V. Deus in adjutorium meum
intende.
R. Domine ad adjuvandum
me festina.

V. Gloria Patri, et Filio, et
Spiritui Sancto. **R.** Sicut erat
in principio, et nunc, et
semper, et in saecula
saeculorum. Alleluia*.

***A Septuagesima usque ad
Pascha, loco Alleluia, dicitur:**

Laus tibi, Domine, Rex
aeternae gloriae.

Ad Matutinum et Laudes

Primus Dolor: ex Simeonis
vaticino. (Luc 2:33-35)

AVE dulcis, Mater Christi!

Start of all the Hours

Hail Mary...

At Matins only

V. O Lord, open my lips.
R. And my mouth will announce
Thy praise.

At Compline only

V. Convert us, O God our
Savior.
R. And turn Thine anger from
us.

At all the Hours

V. O God, come to my aid.
R. O Lord, make haste to help
me.

V. Glory be to the Father, and
to the Son, and to the Holy
Spirit. **R.** As it was in the
beginning, is now, and ever
shall be, world without end.
Alleluia*.

***During Lent until Easter,
instead of the alleluia the
following is said:**

Praise to Thee, O Lord, King of
everlasting glory.

At Matins and Lauds

First Sorrow: The Prophecy of
holy Simeon. (Lk 2:33-35)

HAIL to thee, Christ's Mother

Quae cor tuum gladio
Transfigendum audis, tristi
Senis vaticinio:
Tanti memor fac doloris,
Mihi sis praesidio,
Ut post vallem hanc
moeroris,
Caeli reddar gaudio.

Ant. Cui comparabo te? Vel
cui assimilabo te, filia
Jerusalem? Cui exaequabo te,
et consolabor Virgo, filia
Sion? Magna est enim velut
mare contritio tua. (Lam.
2:13)

V. Tuam ipsius animam
doloris gladius pertransivit:
R. Ut releventur ex multis
cordibus cogitationes. (Luc.
2:35)

Oremus
Interveniat pro nobis,
quaesumus, Domine Jesu
Christe nunc et in hora
mortis nostrae apud tuam
clementiam Beata Virgo
Maria Mater tua, cujus
sacratissimam animam in
hora tuae Passionis doloris
gladius pertransivit. Per te,
Jesu Christe, Salvator mundi,
qui cum Patre et Spiritu
Sancto vivis et regnas per
omnia saecula saeculorum.
Amen.

dearest!
Who, by sad prophetic word,
In the sacred temple hearest
Of the keen heart-piercing
sword:
Make me mindful of thy sorrow,
Guard me, that, the valley past,
I may, in the eternal morrow,
Give thee thanks in heaven at
last.

Ant. To what shall I compare
thee, or to what shall I liken
thee, O daughter of Jerusalem?
To what shall I equal thee, that
I may comfort thee, O virgin
daughter of Sion? For great as
the sea is thy destruction.
(Lam. 2:13)

V. Thine own soul a sword shall
pierce.

R. That out of many hearts
thoughts may be revealed. (Lk.
2:35)

Let us pray
O Lord Jesus Christ, we
beseech Thee that the blessed
Virgin Mary, Thy Mother,
whose most holy soul was
pierced by the sword of sorrow
in the hour of thy passion, may
appeal for us to Thy clemency,
now and at the hour of our
death. Through Thee, Jesus
Christ, Savior of the world, who
with the Father and the Holy
Spirit, livest and reignest,
forever and ever. Amen.

Ad Primam

Secundus Dolor: ex fuga in Aegyptum. (Mt 2:13-15)

AVE dulcis Mater Christi
Quae prae Regis furia
Saeviente, corde tristi,
Fugis exul patria:
O Regina beatorum,
Nostri spes exilii,
Fac infractus vi malorum
Fiam consors Filii.

Ant. Vide, Domine, quoniam
tribulor: conturbatus est
venter meus: subversum est
cor meum in memetipsa;
quoniam amaritudine plena
sum: foris interfecit gladius,
et domi mors similis est.
(Lam 1:20)

V. Domine ante te omne
desiderium meum.

R. Et gemitus meus a te non
est absconditus.

Oremus
Interveniatur pro nobis,
quaesumus, Domine Jesu
Christe nunc et in hora
mortis nostrae apud tuam
clementiam Beata Virgo
Maria Mater tua, cujus
sacratissimam animam in
hora tuae Passionis doloris
gladius pertransivit. Per te,
Jesu Christe, Salvator mundi,
qui cum Patre et Spiritu

At Prime

Second Sorrow: The flight into Egypt. (Mt 2:13-15)

HAIL, thou Christ's sweet
Mother, flying
From an angry tyrant's hand,
In thy heart's deep sorrow
sighing,
Banished from thy fatherland:
O thou Queen of blessed
spirits,
Exiles never seek in vain,
Safe from evil man inherits,
Grant me with thy Son to reign.

Ant. Behold, O Lord, for I am in
distress; my bowels are
troubled, my heart is turned
within me, for I am full of
bitterness: abroad the sword
destroyeth, and at home there
is death alike. (Lam 1:20)

V. Lord, all my desire is before
Thee.

R. And my groaning is not
hidden from Thee.

Let us pray
O Lord Jesus Christ, we
beseech Thee that the blessed
Virgin Mary, Thy Mother,
whose most holy soul was
pierced by the sword of sorrow
in the hour of thy passion, may
appeal for us to Thy clemency,
now and at the hour of our
death. Through Thee, Jesus
Christ, Savior of the world, who
with the Father and the Holy

Sancto vivis et regnas per
omnia saecula saeculorum.
Amen.

Ad Tertiam

Tertius Dolor: ex amisso
duodenni Filio. (Luc 2:41-52)

AVE dulcis Mater Christi.
Natum lugens inclytum:
O quam tristis quaesivisti
Triduo iam perditum:
Hujus memor o doloris!
Christum fac inveniam,
Et inventum per amoris
Nexum semper teneam.

Ant. Plorans ploravit in nocte
et lachrimae eius in maxillis
eius, non est qui consoletur
eam ex omnibus charis eius.
(Lam 1:2)

V. Posuisti me desolatam.
R. Tota die moerore
confectam. (Lam 1:13)

Oremus
Interveniat pro nobis,
quaesumus, Domine Jesu
Christe nunc et in hora
mortis nostrae apud tuam
clementiam Beata Virgo
Maria Mater tua, cujus
sacratissimam animam in
hora tuae Passionis doloris

Spirit, livest and reignest,
forever and ever. Amen.

At Terce

Third Sorrow: The Loss of the
Child Jesus. (Lk 2:41-52)

HAIL, to thee, Christ's Mother
sweetest.
When was lost thy Son, thy
King:
Thou, with mother's woe
completest,
Three days sought Him
sorrowing:
Ne'er be this remembrance
over!
Let me find thy Son by grace,
And when I have found my
lover,
Hold Him in a long embrace.

Ant. Weeping she hath wept in
the night, and her tears are on
her cheeks: there is none to
comfort her among all them
that were dear to her. (Lam
1:2)

V. He hath made me desolate.
R. Washed with sorrow all day
long. (Lam 1:13)

Let us pray
O Lord Jesus Christ, we
beseech Thee that the blessed
Virgin Mary, Thy Mother,
whose most holy soul was
pierced by the sword of sorrow
in the hour of thy passion, may
appeal for us to Thy clemency,
now and at the hour of our

gladius pertransivit. Per te,
Jesu Christe, Salvator mundi,
qui cum Patre et Spiritu
Sancto vivis et regnas per
omnia saecula saeculorum.
Amen.

Ad Sextam

Quartus Dolor: ex captivitate
flagellatione, et baiulatione
Crucis Christi. (Luc 26:32)

AVE dulcis Mater Christi,
Quae dilectum Filium
Capi, coepi, flens vidisti,
Manibus crudelium:
O per poenas Patientis,
Nobis fit impunitas:
Per amorem Condolentis
Matris crescat caritas!

Ant. Vide Domine
afflictionem meam; quoniam
erectus est inimicus. Manum
suam misit hostis ad omnia
desiderabilia mea. (Lam 1:9-
10)

V. Quis dabit capiti meo
quam, et oculis meis fontem
lacrimarum.

R. Et plorabo die ac nocte.

Oremus
Interveniatur pro nobis,
quaesumus, Domine Jesu
Christe nunc et in hora

death. Through Thee, Jesus
Christ, Savior of the world, who
with the Father and the Holy
Spirit, livest and reignest,
forever and ever. Amen.

At Sext

Fourth Sorrow: The Meeting of
Jesus carrying His cross. (Lk
26:32)

HAIL, Christ's sweetest
Mother, looking
While thy Son was led along,
And from cruel hands was
brooking
Blows and thorns and torture-
thong:
By the pains which ne'er
another
Bare as He, may we find peace:
By the love of his dear Mother
Suffering, may our love
increase!

Ant. Behold, O Lord, my
affliction, because the enemy is
lifted up: the enemy hath put
out his hand to all her desirable
things. (Lam 1:9-10)

V. Who will give water to my
head and a fountain of tears to
my eyes?

R. And I will weep day and
night.

Let us pray
O Lord Jesus Christ, we
beseech Thee that the blessed
Virgin Mary, Thy Mother,

mortis nostrae apud tuam
clementiam Beata Virgo
Maria Mater tua, cujus
sacratissimam animam in
hora tuae Passionis doloris
gladius pertransivit. Per te,
Jesu Christe, Salvator mundi,
qui cum Patre et Spiritu
Sancto vivis et regnas per
omnia saecula saeculorum.
Amen.

Ad Nonam

Quintus Dolor: ex
Crucifixione. (Jn 19:25-30)

AVE dulcis Mater Christi.
Quae sub Crucis arbore
Gemens, Natum morte tristi,
Vides, heu! succumbere.
O per ensem hunc doloris
Qui tunc scidit animam
Fac me firmet vis amoris
Mortis ad victoriam.

Ant. O vos omnes qui
transitis, per viam attendite
et videte,
si est dolor, sicut dolor meus.
(Lam 1:12)

V. Plauserunt super te
manibus omnes transeuntes
per viam.
R. Sibi laverunt et moverunt
caput suum super filiam
Jerusalem.

whose most holy soul was
pierced by the sword of sorrow
in the hour of thy passion, may
appeal for us to Thy clemency,
now and at the hour of our
death. Through Thee, Jesus
Christ, Savior of the world, who
with the Father and the Holy
Spirit, livest and reignest,
forever and ever. Amen.

At Nones

Fifth Sorrow: The Crucifixion of
Jesus. (Jn 19:25-30)

HAIL, Christ's sweetest
Mother, sighing
'Neath the cross predestined
tree,
When thy Son, so sadly dying,
Turned His eyes to look on
thee.
By the sword of bitter sorrow,
Which then cleft thy soul in
twain,
Grant that I love's might may
borrow,
And o'er death the victory gain.

Ant. O all ye that pass by the
way, attend and see if there be
any sorrow like to my sorrow.
(Lam 1:12)

V. All they that passed by the
way have clapped their hands
at thee.
R. They have hissed, and
wagged their head at the
daughter of Jerusalem.

Oremus
Interveniat pro nobis,
quaesumus, Domine Jesu
Christe nunc et in hora
mortis nostrae apud tuam
clementiam Beata Virgo
Maria Mater tua, cujus
sacratissimam animam in
hora tuae Passionis doloris
gladius pertransivit. Per te,
Jesu Christe, Salvator mundi,
qui cum Patre et Spiritu
Sancto vivis et regnas per
omnia saecula saeculorum.
Amen.

Ad Vesperas

Sextus Dolor: ex Corporis e
Cruce sublatione. (In 19:31-
37)

AVE dulcis Mater Christi.
Quae de Cruce mortuum
Ulnis natum suscepisti,
Madens unda fletuum
Eia praestet vis doloris,
Mater plena gratiae,
Ut supremis server horis
Gremio clementiae.

Ant. Ne vocetis me Noemi
(id est pulchram) sed vocate
me Mara (id est amaram)
quia amaritudine valde me
replevit Omnipotens. (Ruth
1:20)

V. Fasciculus myrrhae
dilectus meus mihi.

Let us pray
O Lord Jesus Christ, we
beseech Thee that the blessed
Virgin Mary, Thy Mother,
whose most holy soul was
pierced by the sword of sorrow
in the hour of thy passion, may
appeal for us to Thy clemency,
now and at the hour of our
death. Through Thee, Jesus
Christ, Savior of the world, who
with the Father and the Holy
Spirit, livest and reignest,
forever and ever. Amen.

At Vespers

Sixth Sorrow: The Taking down
from the Cross. (Jn 19:31-37)

HAIL, Christ's sweetest
Mother, craving
Dead, thy Son, let down from
rood,
In thy arms to bear, and laving
Him with thy tears' holy flood,
May the power of that great
anguish,
Mary Mother full of grace,
Keep me, when in death I
languish,
Till I see my Savior's face.

Ant. Call me not Noemi (that
is, beautiful), but call me Mara
(that is, bitter), for the
Almighty hath quite filled me
with bitterness. (Ruth 1:20)

V. A bundle of myrrh is my
Beloved to me.

R. Inter ubera mea
commorabitur. (Cant. 1)

Oremus
Interveniat pro nobis,
quaesumus, Domine Jesu
Christe nunc et in hora
mortis nostrae apud tuam
clementiam Beata Virgo
Maria Mater tua, cujus
sacratissimam animam in
hora tuae Passionis doloris
gladius pertransivit. Per te,
Jesu Christe, Salvator mundi,
qui cum Patre et Spiritu
Sancto vivis et regnas per
omnia saecula saeculorum.
Amen.

Ad Completorium

Septimus Dolor: ex
Sepultura. (In 19:38-42)

AVE dulcis Mater Christi.
Quae sepulchro conditum
Plangis Natum, heu quam
tristi
Mente volvens obitum!
In virtute tot dolorum
Quos tulisti fortiter,
Omnem contra vim malorum,
Stare nos viriliter:
Demum sorte beatorum
Fac gaudere iugiter.

Ant. Idcirco ego plorans et
oculus meus deducens aquas:
quia longe factus est a me

R. He shall abide between my
breasts. (Cant. 1)

Let us pray
O Lord Jesus Christ, we
beseech Thee that the blessed
Virgin Mary, Thy Mother,
whose most holy soul was
pierced by the sword of sorrow
in the hour of thy passion, may
appeal for us to Thy clemency,
now and at the hour of our
death. Through Thee, Jesus
Christ, Savior of the world, who
with the Father and the Holy
Spirit, livest and reignest,
forever and ever. Amen.

At Compline

Seventh Sorrow: The Burial of
Jesus. (Jn 19:38-42)

HAIL, Christ's sweetest
Mother, weeping
Jesus hidden in the tomb,
Done to death and lowly
sleeping,
Thou dost mourn His early
doom!
By the might of anguished
hours,
Suffered with a constant heart,
'Gainst the force of evil powers,
Help us bear a manly part:
Till with Saints on heavenly
towers
We may join thee where thou
art.

Ant. Therefore do I weep, and
my eyes run down with water,
because the Comforter, the

consolator convertens
animam meam. (Lam 1:16)

relief of my soul, is far from
me. (Lam 1:16)

V. Defecerunt prae lacrimis
oculi mei.

V. My eyes have failed with
weeping.

R. Conturbata sunt viscera
mea. (Lam 2:11)

R. Within me all is troubled.
(Lam 2:11)

Oremus
Interveniatur pro nobis,
quaesumus, Domine Jesu
Christe nunc et in hora
mortis nostrae apud tuam
clementiam Beata Virgo
Maria Mater tua, cujus
sacratissimam animam in
hora tuae Passionis doloris
gladius pertransivit. Per te,
Jesu Christe, Salvator mundi,
qui cum Patre et Spiritu
Sancto vivis et regnas per
omnia saecula saeculorum.
Amen.

Let us pray
O Lord Jesus Christ, we
beseech Thee that the blessed
Virgin Mary, Thy Mother,
whose most holy soul was
pierced by the sword of sorrow
in the hour of thy passion, may
appeal for us to Thy clemency,
now and at the hour of our
death. Through Thee, Jesus
Christ, Savior of the world, who
with the Father and the Holy
Spirit, livest and reignest,
forever and ever. Amen.

Commendatio

Commendation, recited at the end of Compline

HAS Horas canonicas cum
devotione,
Tibi Virgo recolo pia ratione;
Ut materni pectoris ex
compassione,

TO thee, O Blessed Virgin, I recite
prayers that are fitting for each
holy rite;
May'st thou with loving mother's
heart be nigh
To be my help, what time I come
to die.

Mihi sis auxilio mortis in
agone.

Amen.

Amen.